State of Colorado Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs Tuesday, April 10, 2012 American Legion Headquarters, Denver, CO

Welcome and Call to Order

Jim Stanko, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1300 hrs. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed for our POWs, MIAs, our troops engaged in battle, and all our service members.

Roll Call of Members and Introduction of Guests

Members Present:

Jim Stanko – Chairman
Robby Robinson – Vice Chairman
James C Bobick – Secretary
Ralph P Bozella - Member
Franklin Jackson, Sr – Member (Excused)
Jason Crow – Member
Kathleen Dunemn – Member
Marvin L Meyers – Emeritus (Excused)

DMVA / CDVA Staff:

Mickey Hunt – DMVA Deputy Director Ray Z. Dissinger – DMVA VTF Administrator Greg Dorman – Legislative Liaison William Conroy – CDVA Director Chris Skzela – CDVA Administration

Guests Included:

Ken Melcher – UVC
Steve Rylant – VFW & UVC
Leanne D. Wheeler – Wheeler Advisory Group
Lacey Golonka – Sen Bennet's Office
Dana Niemela – HVRP & VFW Post 1
Dick Young – ESGR
Wayne Thompson – VFW
Sheila Scanlon – Women Marines Association
Paula Sarlls – Women Marines Association
James Cunningham – Hiring Our Heroes
Izzy Abbass – VFW Post 1
Keith Jarolimek – 41D

George Cassidy – Denver County Service Officer Holli Keyser – Denver Metro Chamber

Approval of Minutes March 13, 2012

The Minutes of the March 13, 2012 were accepted unanimously.

Board Member Comments

Ralph Bozella informed the Board and guests of the upcoming honor rally to be held at the Capitol on April 16th for American Military Families.

Jim Stanko reported on the recent ribbon cutting which was held March 23rd for the new VA Medical Center Surgical Suite and Surgical Support Center in Grand Junction. It consists of four operating rooms plus a 10-bed intensive care unit. Mr. Stanko also reported on his attendance on March 30th at the DU Campus for Senator Bennet's committee on veteran issues. Discussion included licensing, proposals and veterans getting out of the service and their needs. Mr. Stanko also passed around a copy of the 2012 Western Slope Veterans Guide. He felt it had an expansive research section for veterans.

Public Comments

Ken Melcher advised that reservations and ads for the upcoming UVC Banquet needed to be to him by this week.

Wayne Thompson reported that he had received no answer from the Governor's Office as to his support of the lottery resolution.

Mickey Hunt reported that the Fort Lupton and Grand Junction Armories had been completed and that the money borrowed was less than anticipated and the unused balance remained in the Veterans Trust Fund.

Izzy Abbass introduced James Cunningham of the Hiring Our Heroes Program who spoke on what his program was about and was invited to network with guests to promote his program.

Lacey Golonka had no major updates to provide but that Senator Bennet's committee continues to work on veteran's education, licensing and transitioning.

Guest Presentations

Holli Keyser of the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce was introduced and she spoke on the Chamber's involvement with various veterans' organizations and programs including Boots to Suits. This program is run in conjunction with the University of Colorado Denver and is designed to help veterans shift from service members to students and then to professionals.

Dick Young furnished recent information on the Employers Support of the Guard Reserves (ESGR). This included an upcoming 3 day expo to be held in Douglas County April 23rd and 24th and a May 4th Awards Banquet. Mr. Young spoke on the purpose of the ESGR which included working with military and employers. Their mission and vision is to develop and promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees.

Paula Sarlls of the Marine Corps League requested support for an upcoming state-wide Colorado Yellow Ribbon Event which is to be held August 10th and 11th and will include a job fair, memorial parade and a veterans' assistance fair.

Discussion

Jim Stanko opened discussion on the recent visit on April 1st with General Anderson and Fort Carson. Attendees included Messrs. Stanko, Robinson, Bobick, Abbass, Cook and also Ms. Dunemn. Comments included that it was an active base with many organizations onsite. Topics discussed transitioning, education, outreach resources, and awareness of the natural drawdown. The Board thanked Mr. Hunt for putting this visit together because they felt a better appreciation of what is being done at Fort Carson and the Pueblo area.

Reports

Izzy Abbass spoke of his and Cameron Cook's meeting with the education team at Fort Carson. They also met with college and presidents' groups. Mr. Abbass reported that venues have been set for the next two years for the Vets in Higher Education Summit including Pikes Peak to host in August. Also Skip from Colorado Mountain College in Leadville offered to host in 2013.

Ray Dissinger gave a brief overview of 2011-2012 fiscal year citing of the \$800,000, \$512,000 has been spent. Mr. Dissinger had passed to Board Members a review of recommendations for grantees. He reported that only one veterans group had been turned down and all others were recommended for their full request or some that had a reduction and a few that were increased. Also submitted to Board Members was a list of priorities, a spread sheet that listed all grant applications and copies of all grant applications.

Bill Conroy and Ms. Dunemn voiced their appreciation of the work Mr. Dissinger does as the Administrator for the Veterans Trust Fund. Mr. Conroy also reported that the position of State Service Officer had been filled and that person would be starting in the very near future. It was requested that Mr. Conroy send the schedule for the Spring Conference which is to be held May 1st through May 4th at the Ramada Inn to all Board Members.

Jay Bobick reported that problems had been resolved and that all nursing homes are now in the black. All residents are reported to be happy with the new changes.

Mr. Bobick also reported that there were five bills that were being tracked and they were now out of committee. 1) spousal licensing/certification support; 2) license plates; 3) adult care; 4) lottery; and 5) Homelake Cemetery.

Action

None at this time.

Future Meetings and Board Travel

Tuesday, April 10, 2012 at 1300 hrs – American Legion Headquarters Sunday, April 29, 2012 at 1500 hrs – UVC Banquet (Renaissance Hotel) Tuesday, May 8[,] 2012 at 1300 hrs – American Legion Headquarters; VTF Grants Wednesday, June 13, 2012 at 0900 hrs – Steamboat Springs; Rural Veteran Issues, Work Session

July, 2012 - No Board Meeting scheduled

Tuesday, August 7, 2012 – Grand Junction; Rifle Nursing Home and Visit to Cemetery

Wednesday, September 12, 2012 – Fitzsimmons VA Hospital Site

Adjournment

1450 hrs